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Another suggestion — simply hideous, but on that account the more alarming, because numbers will surely approve it — is to “ beautify ” Mount Vernon with the monuments of “ great ” men, that is, to turn it into a larger Congressional burying-ground, where the member from Buncombe, who has been able to accumulate a “ pile ” in California, may have it all converted into marble, and placed above his relics, or the last successful demagogue, killed in a brawl, may be sure of a pyramid at least, contributed by kindred spirits.

We would have the whole one grand monument, — majestic, beautiful, living ; we would not divide his sacredness by the introduction even of the name we love best. If we tolerated any accessory interest, — as particular sites must undoubtedly be distinguished by appropriate designations, — we would give to some beauteous eminence, that should command a view of the whole, the name of the lady who originated the plan of the memorial ; and find, in some spot made beautiful alike by sun and shade, by art and nature, room for an Everett Fountain. Further than this, we could not be persuaded to go.

ART. III.—1. *History of the Life and Times of EDMUND BURKE.*

By THOMAS MACKNIGHT, Author of “ The Right Hon. B. D’Israeli, M. P., a Literary and Political Biography ”; and “ Thir-ty Years of Foreign Policy : a History of the Secretaryships of the Earl of Aberdeen and Viscount Palmerston.” Vols. I. and II. London : Chapman and Hall. 1858. 8vo. pp. xxxi. and 527, 556.

2. *The Works and Correspondence of the Right Honorable EDMUND BURKE.* A New Edition. London : Francis and John Rivington. 1852. 8 vols. 8vo.

WE welcome a new Life of Edmund Burke with much satisfaction. When Dr. Bisset wrote, the materials for a thorough and comprehensive survey of the subject were far less abundant and valuable than those which we now possess ; and although his work is an authority upon some points, and is not without

literary merit, it is almost forgotten. Of the more recent biographers of Burke, both Croly and Prior were Tories, having little sympathy with the principles which he advocated during the earlier part of his career, and reserving their heartiest praise for his denunciations of the French Revolution. Neither produced a work which satisfies the requirements of the subject. Dr. Croly's Life was written to subserve a temporary purpose, and it is little more than an overgrown political pamphlet. Its style is vivacious and brilliant; but the narrow views and partisan aims of the writer would repel many readers, even if his work professed to exhibit a complete view of its hero, instead of being restricted to a single phase of his character. Mr. Prior's Life is a work of greater pretension, and has long held an established place in biographical literature. Nor do we suppose that it will be soon superseded. The author was intimately acquainted with Burke's various productions; he had a just appreciation of his unrivalled genius; and he had access to numerous unpublished letters. His picture of Burke's private life is minute in its details, and upon the whole satisfactory. But when the biographer passes from the domestic circle and the friendly group into the arena of party warfare, he signally fails to do justice to his theme, and we are often compelled to take issue with him upon his recorded opinions of men and measures. His style is singularly hard and inflexible, and is sometimes marked by even graver faults.

Mr. Macknight's History is not yet complete, and his narrative is brought down only to the resignation of the Rockingham Whigs, in the summer of 1782. But enough has been published to enable us to speak of it in general terms as a work of solid and enduring excellence. Mr. Macknight has thoroughly mastered his subject; he has brought to it a large acquaintance with political history; and he has studied it by the light of those invaluable family documents which have been given to the public in such profusion within the last fifteen or twenty years. His plan is broad and well defined, and includes both the public and the private life of Burke. His researches, it is true, have not been rewarded by the discovery of much new material; but he has made a judicious use of such facts as he has first brought to light, as well as of

all that are accessible in print. His language is generally clear and forcible, and sometimes rises into genuine eloquence. But it must also be conceded, that it is often diffuse, careless, and incorrect; and occasionally we meet with a bit of tawdry fustian, which would seem to indicate that the writer had not bestowed much care upon the revision of his work. This impression is strengthened by observing the number of typographical blunders in different parts of the volumes. Certainly no man in his senses would deliberately print such a sentence as the following in reference to the publication of the debates in Parliament. "The new House of Commons," Mr. Macknight remarks, "though perhaps both the most arbitrary and the most servile which had been chosen since the Revolution, was, by the exertions of Burke, destined to be the last that could hide its proceedings from the light of day; and the foul spectre which darkness had engendered, shrank away from that glorious Lucifer, son of the morning, the reporter in the gallery."* It is not often that we find worse specimens of rhetoric run mad; and a writer of Mr. Macknight's ability who descends to such platitudes and anti-climaxes deserves the severest criticism. The same want of taste is even more apparent in the headings of his chapters. "In the Forlorn Hope of Politicians," "Faithful among the Faithless," "Fulfilled Prophecies," "Through Keppel's Agony of Glory," "At the Hour of England's Necessity and of Ireland's Opportunity," "Storm and Victory," are among the many absurd captions which he has deliberately chosen. A strong partisan bias in favor of Burke, diffuseness, and a fondness for swollen sentences and mixed metaphors, are the author's besetting sins.

The edition of Burke's Works and Correspondence before us comprises all of his writings usually printed under this title, together with some letters and notes of speeches which had previously remained in manuscript. But it does not include the "Account of the European Settlements in America," the authorship of which is in doubt, nor any of his speeches which were not revised by himself.† It is, indeed, a striking circum-

* Vol. I. p. 291.

† The Account is reprinted in the beautiful edition of Burke's Works published

stance, as noted by Mr. Macknight, that "neither a complete edition of Burke's Correspondence, nor a complete edition of his Works, has yet been added to the literature of the country he adorned." We are firmly of the opinion, however, that his reputation has not suffered in the general judgment by the omission of the inadequate reports of his Parliamentary eloquence which alone remain in the Cavendish Debates and other contemporary records. Yet it is only by a careful examination of these reports, even in their imperfect and unsatisfactory state, that we can form a just estimate of Burke's powers, and of his real relations with his contemporaries. In the mean time, this edition of his Works is in several respects the best that has been published.

Although the ancestors of Edmund Burke had been settled in Ireland for many generations, they did not belong to the aboriginal race, but were derived from an Anglo-Norman stock. His father was a respectable attorney in Dublin, of small means and with a numerous family; and it was in this city that the statesman was born. The year of his birth is not known, and is differently given by different biographers. Mr. Prior, without recognizing the uncertainty which exists upon this point, says that he was born in 1730. The editors of Burke's Correspondence, with greater probability, fix upon the year 1728. Between these conflicting statements, Mr. Macknight is in doubt; but he seems inclined to adopt an intermediate date, and finally accepts 1729. Of these three dates, Mr. Prior's is certainly supported by the smallest weight of authority, and the suppositions by which it is sustained may be safely pronounced altogether untenable. On the other hand, the registry of Burke's admission to the College of Dublin, which bears date April 14, 1743, describes him as being then in his sixteenth year; and his epitaph in Beaconsfield Church, after giving the date of his death, July 9, 1797, adds that he was sixty-eight. But we are told by the editors

some years since by Messrs. Little and Brown, of this city. Mr. Prior entertains no doubt of its authenticity, and Mr. Macknight is equally clear that Burke was "the principal, if not sole, author." But Burke himself said that he only revised it; and it has not been included in any English edition of his works. For various reasons, we are inclined to accept Lord Macartney's assertion, that it was a joint production, to which Burke contributed.

of his Correspondence, it was subsequently the impression of his family that he was older than had been supposed. In a postscript to a letter to the Marquis of Rockingham dated January 12, 1775, he says, " My birthday,—I need not say how long ago." We may conclude, therefore, in the want of positive evidence, that he was born on the 12th of January, 1728. According to this view, he was twenty-one years older than Fox, thirty-one years older than Pitt, and nearly twenty-four years older than Sheridan.

Of his early life not much is known; and it is supposed that previously to his death he destroyed all the family letters in his possession which might throw light upon the subject. He is said to have been of a weak and delicate constitution, and to have spent a considerable part of his time at Castle-town Roche, the residence of his mother's family, who were Catholics. In the spring of 1741 he was sent to a classical school at Ballytore, a little village about thirty miles from Dublin. Here he remained only two years; but he made considerable progress in his studies, and always retained a pleasant recollection of the school. The earliest of his published letters are addressed to the son of his old teacher, and this juvenile friendship was kept fresh through his whole life. In Parliament he bore honorable testimony to the virtues of his first schoolmaster. "He had been educated," he said in one of his speeches at the time of the No-Popery riots in 1780, "as a Protestant of the Church of England by a Dissenter who was an honor to his sect, though that sect was considered one of the purest. Under his eye he had read the Bible morning, noon, and night, and had ever since been the happier and better man for such reading." Early in 1743 he was entered of Trinity College, Dublin; and in 1748 he took his Bachelor's degree. But he does not appear to have distinguished himself at college. His reading had been desultory; he had a taste for versifying; and, with his impulsive nature, he was not likely to apply himself very closely to branches of learning in which he was not specially interested. Yet he enlarged and strengthened his mind by extensive reading in natural philosophy, logic, mathematics, history, and poetry, the last of which was his favorite study. He also took part in

a Debating Society, of which many of his college friends were members; and in 1747 he received a vote of thanks for declaiming in character Moloch's address to the fallen angels.

In 1747 he was admitted at the Middle Temple; and early in 1750 he went to London. For the law he had little inclination; and he kept his terms with great irregularity. Literature beguiled him from less agreeable professional studies, and ill-health was a sufficient plea for withdrawing for a time from the dust and turmoil of the great city. During his vacations he made several excursions to different parts of England, in company with his kinsman, William Burke; and in one of his letters to Shackleton he has given an amusing account of the curiosity excited in the country people by his studious and retired habits. The same unsatisfied curiosity has descended to our own time; and his biographers are as much in doubt respecting his way of life during his first years in England as was his landlady at Turlaine. "I believe that you be gentlemen," she said to Burke and his companion, "but I ask no questions." Indeed, it is not until he entered Parliament, in 1766, that we have much satisfactory information about his personal history. It seems probable that he derived a small income from his literary labors, and that he received some remittances from his father. But there are no existing traces of his having published anything previous to the appearance of the "Vindication of Natural Society." Manuscripts of an earlier date, however, were found among his papers, and are printed with his Works.

About this time he entertained a design of coming to this country; and it has been stated that he was offered a considerable employment in New York. The design was relinquished in consequence of his father's opposition; and in a letter printed by Mr. Prior he very dutifully says: "I have nothing nearer my heart than to make you easy; and I have no scheme or design, however reasonable it may seem to me, that I would not gladly sacrifice to your quiet, and submit to your judgment." Still he was not called to the bar, and he does not appear to have bestowed much further thought or time upon the study of the law. He had not been idle; and two years after the publication of Bolingbroke's posthumous

works, he gave to the world a little pamphlet entitled “A Vindication of Natural Society: or a View of the Miseries and Evils arising to Mankind from every Species of Civil Society, in a Letter to Lord * * * *, by a late Noble Writer.” In this keen and pleasant satire he imitated the polished style of Lord Bolingbroke with so much success, that Chesterfield and Warburton at first believed it to be an authentic work. Its whole tone and spirit were skilfully copied from Bolingbroke’s writings, and it shows at once Burke’s power of mimicry and the extent and variety of his reading. Ancient and modern history are alike brought into the service of his argument, and, by an artful choice and arrangement of his materials, he easily makes the worse appear the better reason. Some writers, indeed, have supposed that in this essay Burke was arguing from his own convictions. But few persons will accept this view, who carefully consider the nature of the argument, or who are familiar with the character of Burke’s mind. In truth, it can be regarded only as an evidence of the strength of his powers, and of the readiness with which he could find plausible arguments in defence of the most absurd opinions.

Encouraged by the success of this work, he published, a few months afterwards, a more elaborate production, which he had written many years before, but which had hitherto rested quietly in his desk. The “Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful” had even more success than his former work, and a second edition was published in the following year, to which he prefixed a brief introductory paper on Taste, and made large additions. But the theory propounded in this Inquiry was very narrow and fallacious, and has often been ridiculed with great severity by subsequent writers on the subject. Indeed, Lord Jeffrey does not hesitate to say, in his discourse upon Beauty: “Of all the suppositions that have been at any time hazarded to explain the phenomena of beauty, this, we think, is the most unfortunately imagined, and the most weakly supported. There is no philosophy in the doctrine, and the fundamental assumption is in every way contradicted by the most familiar experience.” Burke was often importuned, in later years, to

reprint this treatise, but he always declined, though it does not appear that he ever doubted the correctness of his theory. Considered merely as the production of a young man at college, the essay is full of promise, and much of it may still be read with interest and profit, for the just observations and striking descriptions which it contains.

Not long after the publication of these two works, Burke married. Unsuccessful attempts have been made in London, Bristol, and Bath to ascertain the time and place of his marriage. But it is believed to have been in the early part of 1757; and, as Mrs. Burke was a Catholic, it is probable that the marriage ceremony was performed according to the rites of the Romish Church. The early part of his married life Burke spent in the family of his father-in-law, Dr. Nugent, a distinguished physician in London. In February, 1758, his first son, Richard Burke, was born. In the following December he again became a father, but the child died in infancy. The elder son, in whom all the father's hopes were centred, died in 1794, three years before his own death. "I live in an inverted order," he says, in reference to this great sorrow, in the "Letter to a Noble Lord." "They who ought to have succeeded me have gone before me. They who should have been to me as posterity are in the place of ancestors. I owe to the dearest relation (which ever must subsist in memory) that act of piety which he would have performed to me; I owe it to him to show that he was not descended, as the Duke of Bedford would have it, from an unworthy parent." Mrs. Burke survived her husband nearly fifteen years; and during his whole married life he seems to have found in her a congenial and helpful companion. She is described as a person of great sweetness of temper, accomplished, energetic, and devoted. Such we know was Burke's own opinion of her; for he has drawn her character in a well-remembered and beautiful sketch of a perfect wife, which he gave her upon the anniversary of their marriage.

In the same year in which he was married the "Account of the European Settlements in America" was first published. We have already expressed the opinion that Burke was not the sole author of this compilation. But we have little doubt

that he was concerned in its preparation ; and this opinion, which is based partly upon internal evidence and partly upon contemporary testimony, is confirmed by the fact that the original assignment of the copyright for fifty guineas is in Burke's handwriting. The work claims to be little more than a compilation, but it is clearly and graphically written, and the curious reader will not fail to notice some judicious remarks upon colonial relations, and other subjects then agitating the public mind in England. The writers had collected much new and curious information both from public and private sources, and the work met an existing want, which insured the success of the publication. Some of its statements are still quoted as authoritative, particularly those relating to the British colonies ; but other portions have been superseded by Dr. Robertson's *History of America* and the still more admirable labors of our own countrymen.

A few months later Burke gave to the world the "Essay towards an Abridgment of the English History." In this work he evidently designed to exhibit the gradual progress of the nation in its laws, manners, and social habits, rather than to present a full and rapid narrative of events. Accustomed to deal with large generalizations rather than with minute details, he made his essay a dissertation upon English history, and not a history in the common acceptation of the word. Unfortunately, he did not complete his design, and the work closes abruptly with the granting of *Magna Charta*. But it bears the marks of his resplendent powers, and as an historical fragment it possesses a value entirely independent of the fame of the writer. To the interest which he took in this study of the early annals of England we probably owe the first suggestion of another historical work, which he commenced in the same year, under the title of "The Annual Register." For this work he wrote the historical chapters for many years, and also contributed some other papers, for an annual salary of one hundred pounds. His history of current events, which was the most important feature in the work, is often quoted, and is justly admired ; but it is a curious circumstance, that no part of it has ever been reprinted in his Works.

He had hitherto taken little share in the discussion of political questions, and was unconnected with any party. His tastes were for the most part literary, and the impression which he appears to have produced was that of a person who was more familiar with books than with men. “I dined with your secretary yesterday,” said Horace Walpole, in a letter written in July, 1761; “there were Garrick and a young Mr. Burke, who wrote a book in the style of Lord Bolingbroke, that was much admired. He is a sensible man, but has not worn off his authorism yet, and thinks there is nothing so charming as writers, and to be one. He will know better one of these days.” Yet, two years before he was thus described by this keen observer, he had evinced a disposition to enter public life, and in the Chatham Papers is a letter recommending him as a suitable person for a vacant consulship at Madrid. For some reason he failed to receive the appointment, and in the same year he formed a connection with William Gerard Hamilton, the exact nature of which has never been understood, though it is probable that Burke was to perform for Hamilton the same friendly service which Frederick the Great had recently exacted of Voltaire. Hamilton had entered Parliament some years before, and had almost immediately risen to distinction upon the extraordinary success of his first speech in the House of Commons. He had already held office, and was in the fair way of advancement, when Burke was introduced to him by Lord Charlemont, a friend of both, and a countryman of Burke. Two years afterward Hamilton’s patron, Lord Halifax, was made Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and Hamilton was appointed Chief Secretary. Burke accompanied his new friend to Ireland, and appears to have been an active and efficient laborer in Hamilton’s service. When the change of ministry took place in England in 1762, upon the resignation of the Duke of Newcastle, the Lord Lieutenant, his Secretary, and Burke, whose position cannot easily be described, recrossed the Channel to look after their own interests. They were so far successful in the object of their visit that Hamilton was appointed Secretary to the Earl of Northumberland, the new Lord Lieutenant, and again returned to Ireland with Burke.

At first Burke had no ostensible office or salary, but in 1763 he received a pension of three hundred pounds per annum, chargeable upon the Irish treasury. This pension he afterwards assigned to Hamilton's attorney at the time of their rupture, although he distinctly asserts that he was less indebted for it to that gentleman than to either of the other three persons concerned in procuring it. Of Burke's history at this period, as we have remarked, very little is known, but whatever may have been the nature of his relations with Hamilton, the connection was productive of little satisfaction. At length, in the early part of 1765, they came to an open and violent rupture. Burke's version of the origin of the quarrel is, that Hamilton demanded of him services which would have deprived him of all moral and intellectual freedom, and have effectually closed all the avenues to advancement.

"The occasion of our difference," he says in a letter to Henry Flood, "was not any act whatsoever on my part; it was entirely upon his; by a voluntary, but most insolent and intolerable demand, amounting to no less than a claim of servitude during the whole course of my life, without leaving to me, at any time, a power of either getting forward with honor, or of retiring with tranquillity. This was really and truly the substance of his demand upon me, to which I need not tell you that I refused, with some degree of indignation, to submit."

Both parties were excessively angry. Hamilton refused to see Burke, alleging that he should not be able to control his temper, on account of his lively sense of the unkindness of the former "companion of his studies," and his friends circulated reports highly injurious to Burke. On the other hand, Burke, in his letters to his friends, aired his vocabulary with great freedom, and showed that he was a perfect master of the art of vituperation.

"I shall never," he says in one letter, "look upon those who, after hearing the whole story, do not think me *perfectly* right, and do not consider Hamilton as an infamous scoundrel, to be in the smallest degree my friends, or even to be persons for whom I am bound to have the slightest esteem, as fair or just estimators of the characters and conduct of men."

The breach was never healed, though both parties lived for more than thirty years after its occurrence.

Shortly after this rupture Burke formed a new connection, which became a source of permanent satisfaction to him, and influenced the whole course of his subsequent life. His friends naturally shared his indignation against Hamilton, and sought to procure for him a position in which his powers might have free exercise. Hamilton himself asserted that Burke had left him for the purpose of joining another patron, probably one of the Townshends; but the charge is emphatically denied by Burke, in a letter to a friend in Ireland. It is certain, however, that his friends made interest for him with the Marquis of Rockingham, to whom he was introduced by Mr. William Fitzherbert, a leading member in the party of that nobleman. The result of their recommendations was his appointment as private secretary to Lord Rockingham, in July, 1765, when the Rockingham Whigs came into office. Lord Rockingham himself, as head of the party, became prime minister. He was a nobleman of pure and disinterested patriotism, free from all personal aims, and of sound judgment upon most subjects; but he was feeble in body, disinclined to public speaking, and not of superior talents. No position, therefore, could at that time have been better suited to call out the strength of Burke's great powers as a writer. From the first his pen was enlisted in defence of the opinions and policy of the party; and when he entered Parliament, in the following December, as member for the borough of Wendover, he at once took a prominent rank as a speaker. Neither Mr. Dowdeswell nor Sir George Savile, the most distinguished members of the party in the Lower House, could aspire to equal oratorical power with him, and gradually Burke became the principal advocate of the views of the party in Parliament, thus uniting in his own person the dissimilar functions of writer and speaker.

His first speech was delivered in January, 1766, upon the question of receiving a petition of the Colonial Congress setting forth the grievances under which America was laboring. No report of this speech has been preserved; but it is known that Burke advocated the reception of the petition, upon the ground that it implied the plenary right of Parliament to govern America, and that Pitt publicly complimented

him upon the ability which he had displayed. In regard to the general question at issue between the Colonies and the parent country, it is clear that his views subsequently underwent a considerable modification. At this time he had “no doubt of the ability of Great Britain to crush, or even extirpate, the Colonies,” nor had he any doubt as to the right of Parliament to tax America. In connection with Charles Yorke he advocated the introduction of the Declaratory Act, in opposition to the views of some of the other leaders of the party; and he assigned to its passage a prominent place among the services rendered by Lord Rockingham’s administration. That ministry did not last long, — being dismissed in July, 1766, upon the formation of Lord Chatham’s famous coalition ministry; but during its continuance Burke was one of the most active and zealous supporters of the measures of his party. His connection with Lord Rockingham did not terminate with the dismissal of the ministers; and he continued to hold the most intimate and confidential relations with him. Almost immediately after the change of ministers, he published an ingenious pamphlet under the title of “A Short Account of a late Short Administration,” in which, in the apparently impartial character of a mere observer, he enumerates the measures adopted by the late ministry. This simple plan is managed with so much skill as to leave an impression upon the reader’s mind that these measures had all been of signal importance and value, and that the dismissal of the ministers was a great loss to the country.

From this time Burke’s career becomes identified with the political history of England; for though he never rose to high office, he took a conspicuous part in nearly every debate, and often enriched English literature by elaborate pamphlets discussing the questions of the day in the light of great principles. It is in his writings and speeches that we must look for the most masterly vindications of the principles of his party.

After the retirement of his political friends and the accession to office of Lord Chatham’s new and unexampled combination, he made a short visit to Ireland. Here he spent three months in social enjoyments, reviving old friendships and making new acquaintance.

"They had," said Burke's mother, writing from Loughrea to one of her friends, "all the gentlemen and ladies of this town and neighborhood to visit them, and had as many invitations to dinner, had they accepted of them, as would take up a great many days. . . . My dear Nelly, I believe you will think me very vain; but as you are a mother, I hope you will excuse it. I assure you that it's no honor that is done him that makes me vain of him, but the goodness of his heart, which I believe no man living has a better; and sure there can't be a better son, nor can there be a better daughter-in-law than his wife."

One effect of this visit to Ireland was exhibited in the ability and success with which, in the next session of Parliament, he opposed a bill excluding Irish wool from some of the English markets. For his exertions upon this occasion and at other times in behalf of his native island, he was honored with the freedom of the city of Dublin, in January, 1767.

At the general election in the spring of 1768, he was again returned to Parliament for the borough of Wendover, by the same interest which had secured his former election. Having thus embarked once more on a public career, he determined "to cast a little root in the country." He accordingly "purchased a house, with an estate of about six hundred acres of land, in Buckinghamshire, twenty-four miles from London." Scarcely a trace now remains of this magnificent estate. But the house, which was destroyed by fire many years since, is described as having been a princely abode, with noble colonnades and graceful porticos, reminding the spectator of Buckingham Palace. It had formerly been the residence of the poet Waller, was enriched with paintings and sculpture, and was surrounded by excellent land, on which the new owner was fond of trying agricultural experiments. No place, indeed, on the score of beauty and of vicinity to London, could have been better adapted for the residence of a philosophical statesman of ample property and cultivated tastes. But Burke was not a man of fortune, and how he could have obtained the means of making so extensive a purchase is a question which has been often and sometimes acrimoniously discussed. It is well known that a portion of this sum was obtained from Lord Rockingham upon a bond, which was never paid, and which was probably among the

bonds cancelled by a codicil to that nobleman's will.* Another portion, it is said, was obtained by a mortgage, and the remainder Mr. Macknight thinks was borrowed of William and Richard Burke, who had been successful speculators in India stock. Burke himself says, in a letter to a Prussian gentleman, written in 1772: "I have never had any concern in the East India Company, nor have taken any part whatsoever in its affairs, except when they came before me in the course of Parliamentary proceedings." Yet there is very good reason for discrediting this statement, if it is to be understood in what seems to be its most obvious meaning; and it has been conjectured upon apparently sufficient grounds, that a portion of the purchase-money was the result of his own successful speculations. The whole matter, however, is involved in a hopeless obscurity, which neither Burke's friends nor his enemies have been able to dispel. It must still be regarded in the light of a curious and not unimportant inquiry.

Though Burke had thus become a landholder and an amateur farmer, politics continued to be his favorite pursuit. Upon the opening of the new Parliament, he at once entered with his accustomed warmth into the discussions upon the affairs of Corsica, the American questions, the case of John Wilkes, and other topics then violently agitating the country. Most of his speeches on these subjects are now lost; but some notes are preserved in the Cavendish Debates and the Parliamentary History, and allusions to them are occasionally to be found in other contemporary records. At a little later period, he again came before the public as a political pamphleteer. During the Parliamentary recess George Grenville had drawn up a party manifesto, under the title of "The Present State of the Nation," sharply attacking the policy of Lord Rockingham and his followers, and exhibiting the immense superiority of the policy advocated by Mr. Grenville. This attack called forth a reply from Burke in the form of an elaborate analysis and refutation, modestly styled "Observations on a late Publication intituled 'The Present State of

* Mr. Macknight, from information furnished by the late Earl Fitzwilliam, thinks that the bonds thus cancelled, all of which had been given within fourteen years, may have amounted to £30,000.

the Nation.' " It deals mainly with questions of a merely temporary interest, and is relieved by few passages of that rich and exuberant eloquence which we usually find in Burke's writings; but its exposure of Grenville's financial and economical blunders is marked by great skill. In certain respects its merits have been greatly exaggerated by Burke's admirers; but as a mere party pamphlet, it is among the most adroit publications of its kind ever written. Here and there we meet with some pointed sarcasm, which must have rankled in his opponent's bosom long after it was uttered, or some striking thought expressed in most felicitous language. By his occasional bursts of eloquence, and still more by the thorough mastery of his subject which he everywhere exhibits, he carries the reader along with him through a discussion necessarily somewhat dry and uninteresting. The pamphlet rendered any alliance between Mr. Grenville and the party of Lord Rockingham impossible; but it undoubtedly added much to Burke's reputation.

In the mean time two questions, not altogether dissimilar in the principles involved, were growing into an importance which overshadowed all other controverted subjects. These were the expulsion of Wilkes, and the expediency of raising a revenue by taxation in the American Colonies. After the condemnation by Parliament of the *North Briton*, No. 45, and his own outlawry, Wilkes had resided for some time in France; but upon the dissolution of Parliament he suddenly reappeared in London, and offered himself to the electors of the metropolis as a candidate for Parliament. Failing of an election here, he determined to contest the great county of Middlesex. At first, his arrival had created but little excitement. Soon, however, zeal in his behalf flamed up to a dangerous height; and this miserable demagogue, by identifying himself with popular rights, became a popular idol.

" When Wilkes first arrived in town," says Horace Walpole in his *Memoirs of the Reign of George III.*, " I had seen him pass before my windows in a hackney-chair, attended but by a dozen children and women; now all Westminster was in a riot. It was not safe to pass through Piccadilly; and every family was forced to put out lights: the windows of every unilluminated house were demolished."

After a short struggle, he was triumphantly returned; but the ministry were determined that he should not enjoy the fruits of this victory. By their strenuous exertions a motion for his expulsion was carried in the House of Commons by a vote of 219 to 137, and a new election was ordered. Wilkes was again chosen; but the House declared the return null and void, and he was not allowed to take his seat. A third election followed, which resulted in the unanimous re-election of Wilkes, and the renewed refusal of the House to recognize the validity of the return. In the fourth election, Colonel Luttrell—a name familiar to every reader of Junius—came forward to oppose the popular favorite; but Wilkes was again chosen, having received 1,143 votes to 296 for Luttrell. The House of Commons, nevertheless, declared, after a debate which lasted until two o'clock on Sunday morning, and by a vote of 197 to 143, that Wilkes was incapacitated from being a candidate, and that consequently Luttrell had been duly chosen. This memorable contest extended through an entire year, and stirred the public mind both in Parliament and in the country to its lowest depth. Upon both sides the discussion was conducted with much zeal and ability. Among the speakers upon the court side was Charles James Fox, then a young man of twenty-one, who had just entered Parliament for the borough of Midhurst, and who now espoused the ministerial cause with the same warmth and energy which were afterwards freely given to the advocacy of popular rights and liberties and to the denunciation of every form of tyranny. Upon the side of the people Burke spoke several times with much ability. For Wilkes personally he had little respect; but he did not fail to perceive that the persecution of the demagogue was in reality an attack upon the liberties of the people, and he boldly stood up in defence of those liberties. He both spoke and voted with the powerless minority in Parliament, and in his correspondence he concerted measures for the adoption of petitions and remonstrances at various county meetings. The petition from Buckinghamshire was drawn up and presented by him, and he also assisted in the preparation of the Yorkshire petition.

In the various debates which took place within the same

period and in the following year upon American affairs, and upon other topics of less importance, he also took an active part. He opposed the Address in answer to the King's Speech at the opening of the session in November, 1768, with much warmth; and a few weeks later he strenuously opposed the Address and Resolutions for bringing to England for trial before a special Commission any person accused of treason committed in America. When Parliament met again in January, 1770, he spoke twice in opposition to the Address, vigorously attacking the ministerial policy, and defending that great light of the modern Whig party, Sir George Savile, who had been assailed by General Conway on account of words spoken in debate. Not long afterward he spoke at length upon the famous Remonstrance and Petition of the City of London to the King, and also in support of Mr. Grenville's bill for regulating the settlement of controverted elections, which he advocated with great ability and success. In May he introduced a series of eight resolutions condemning the ministerial policy in relation to American affairs. These resolutions he advocated with even more than his usual ability, and they had also the powerful support of George Grenville; but they were defeated by a majority of two to one.

Early in the same year Burke published his "Thoughts on the Causes of the Present Discontents." This celebrated pamphlet had been for a long time in preparation, and was designed to vindicate the propriety of party connections, and the necessity of government by party. Though its publication had been delayed in order that it might be submitted in manuscript to various members of the Rockingham connection, and Burke had accordingly received suggestions from them while he was engaged upon it, there can be no doubt that the plan was entirely his own, and that the language in which it is clothed was equally his own.* It bears upon

* In a letter to Lord Rockingham in July, 1769, Burke says: "I had some notion of casting it into the form of a letter, addressed to a person who had long been in Parliament, and is now retired with all his old principles and regards still fresh and alive; I mean old Mr. White. I wish to know whether your Lordship likes this." In another letter to the same nobleman he says: "I send you a good

every page the marks of his transcendent genius, and is an imperishable monument to his unrivalled powers as a political philosopher. Less extensive than the *Observations upon Grenville's pamphlet*, it is not less cogent in argument, and is far more brilliant in style. Indeed, no subject could have been better suited to Burke's genius, and certainly nothing could have been more admirable than his treatment. The magnificent sweep of his generalizations as he gathers up the history of the past or paints the existing condition of affairs, the profound political truths which he teaches with unrivalled clearness and force of statement, and the splendor of his eloquence in the rhetorical passages, render it one of the most remarkable and admirable of his numerous pamphlets. It naturally provoked many replies. Of these the most striking was by Mrs. Catherine Macaulay, a sister of Alderman Sawbridge, and author of a *History of England* which in its own day was far more popular than was Hume's great work. This lady had adopted strong republican principles, and, taking exception to some of Burke's views, she attacked him with ability and bitterness in a pamphlet which is now forgotten, but which had an extended reputation at the time.

During the next three or four years Burke spoke frequently, and often with great ability and animation, as is evident even from the imperfect reports now lying before us. Among the subjects thus discussed were a petition from certain clergymen praying for relief from subscription to the *Thirty-nine Articles*,

part of what I have been meditating about the system of the court, and which you were so earnest to see carried into execution. I thought it better to let you see what was finished, rather than to postpone it until the whole was completed. The design appears distinctly enough, from what has been done. If you and your friends approve of it, you will be so good to send it back, with your observations, as soon as possible, that it may go to the press." In a subsequent letter he says: "Since I began this letter, which was two or three days ago, I have done something not wholly to displease myself, in the beginning of the pamphlet. It was necessary to change it wholly from the manner in which you saw it, and I think the change has not been for the worse." Finally, in a letter dated December 5, 1769, he writes: "I wait, with some impatience, the return of the papers, with your observations and corrections. If ever, they ought to appear as soon as possible. I am drawing to a conclusion, but I do not send this manuscript; partly, because it is not yet arranged to my mind; partly, because I expect soon to see your Lordship in London."

a bill for the relief of the Dissenters, which he warmly supported, two bills for restraining the East India Company from the performance of certain acts, to which he gave an equally strenuous opposition, and the Boston Port Bill and the Quebec Bill, against both of which he spoke several times.* On the 19th of April, 1774, just one year before the skirmish at Lexington, he delivered a memorable speech on the general subject of American Taxation, in the debate on Mr. Rose Fuller's motion for a repeal of the duty on tea. This speech is reprinted in his *Works*, and is the earliest speech of which we have any adequate report. It made a deep impression on the House, and it was universally allowed that Burke had excelled himself, and had made the most masterly speech ever perhaps uttered in a public assembly. Nor need we feel surprised that this impression should have been produced upon those who heard it, when we consider how powerfully it fixes the reader's attention even now, after the lapse of more than three quarters of a century. The richness of its style, its freshness and its harmonious flow, and the variety and felicity of its illustrations, elevate it above the standard of Parliamentary eloquence not less certainly than do the breadth of its views and the depth of its wisdom place it among the finest productions of political philosophy. In truth, nothing can be happier than the characterization of George Grenville, the description of Lord Chatham's second ministry and of

* Several of his speeches on the Quebec Bill are deserving of especial notice, particularly those upon the clauses establishing the boundary line between Canada and New York, and allowing the free exercise of the Romish faith, and upon a motion for introducing a clause providing for trial by jury in civil causes. In one of these speeches, delivered on the 7th of June, 1774, he stated his views upon the general subject of toleration, at the same time maintaining that "every one ought to contribute to the support of some religion or other." Referring to home politics, he said: "There is but one healing, catholic principle of toleration which ought to find favor in this House. It is needed, not only in our Colonies, but here. The thirsty earth of our own country is gasping and gaping and crying out for that healing shower from heaven." And he added: "I look upon the people of Canada as coming, by the dispensation of God, under the British government. I would have us govern it in the same manner as the all-wise disposition of Providence would govern it. We know He suffers the sun to shine upon the righteous and unrighteous; and we ought to suffer all classes, without distinction, to enjoy equally the right of worshipping God according to the light he has been pleased to give them."

the confusion into which it was thrown when his controlling presence was withdrawn, the sketch of Charles Townshend's character, and the indignant reply to Lord Carmarthen. Nor would it be easy to find elsewhere a more profound philosophy applied to the discussion of political affairs, than presides over his whole treatment of the complicated questions with which he had to deal. But those winged words fell on unwilling ears; other counsels prevailed; and the motion was lost by a vote of 49 to 182.

Early in the autumn of 1774 Parliament was dissolved, and a new election was ordered,—a state of things for which Burke was by no means prepared. The pecuniary affairs of Lord Verney, through whose interest he had hitherto been returned free of expense, had become so much embarrassed, that it was necessary for Burke “either to quit public life or to find some other avenue to Parliament.” In this emergency he had recourse to Lord Rockingham, in a long letter frankly stating all the circumstances of the case. The result was that Lord Rockingham placed his own borough of Malton at Burke's disposal, and he was at once elected. But scarcely had this arrangement been completed when he received a new honor, and a fresh mark of the estimation in which his services were held. Upon the very day of his return, he received an invitation to stand as one of the candidates for the great commercial city of Bristol. After a brief consultation with his new constituents he determined to accept the invitation, and at once set out for Bristol, where the poll was then in progress. The struggle was severe and protracted; but at its conclusion Burke was declared to be elected, and he accordingly took his seat in Parliament as member for Bristol. His speeches at Bristol upon the occasion of offering himself as a candidate and at the close of the poll were printed in a pamphlet at the time, and are reproduced in his collected Works. They are moderate and judicious in tone, and are chiefly noticeable as containing an explicit declaration that he should not feel bound by the instructions of his constituents to vote upon any question in a manner contrary to his own assured convictions. Upon this point he afterwards had occasion to repeat his opinions at greater length, and with even added force of

argument ; but this early statement of them was an important and significant step.

American affairs at once engaged the attention of Parliament, and the whole course of the ministerial policy was vigorously assailed. Fox had not yet formally allied himself with the Rockingham Whigs, but throughout these debates he acted in entire harmony with Burke. Both took a conspicuous part in the discussions, and it is generally conceded that they never spoke with greater power, or with a more entire command of their resources, than they did during the American war. Mr. Grattan, who had often heard Fox speak, bore strong testimony in later years to the surpassing ability of his speeches upon American questions ; and his judgment is confirmed by Burke, Gibbon, Horace Walpole, and others, who refer to particular speeches in terms of the highest praise. It is to this period that we likewise owe the finest of Burke's published speeches, and the imperfect reports of others show that they were equal to any of his subsequent speeches which were not revised for publication by himself. The warmth of his language sometimes indeed led him to the extreme verge of Parliamentary decorum ; but even in his most passionate appeals the correctness of his general principles could not be denied. Among the more noticeable speeches which he delivered at the commencement of this session, was one upon the second Petition of the London merchants for reconciliation with America. In this speech he painted in strong colors the horrors of a civil war brought on by "the counsels of a ministry precipitate to dye the rivers of America with the blood of her inhabitants," and boldly told them that they could not accomplish the destruction of America, "without at the same time plunging a dagger into the vitals of Great Britain." At this time, in common with some of the other Opposition leaders, he appears to have contemplated an impeachment of the ministers, professedly reserving himself, in the words of the report before us, "for that day when, if properly supported by the people, he vowed, by all that was dear to him here and hereafter, he would pursue to condign punishment the advisers of measures fraught with every destructive consequence to the constitution,

the commerce, the rights and liberties of England." He also spoke with great earnestness and power in opposition to the bill for restraining the trade and commerce of the New England Colonies, and in opposition to Lord North's Conciliatory Proposition. But the ablest of all his speeches was delivered upon the 22d of March, 1775, in introducing his own plan for Conciliation with America. This celebrated speech produced but little effect upon Parliament, yet it is scarcely possible to exaggerate its merits. Fox, whose opinion upon such a subject must have the authority of a final judgment, pronounced it the greatest of Burke's speeches, and Sir James Mackintosh, whose criticism is scarcely less valuable, is equally strong in his praise. "It has," says that eminent man in his Journal, "the careful correctness of his first manner, joined to the splendor of his second; it was the highest flight of his genius under the guidance of taste. Except a few *Burkeisms* in the noble peroration, it contains few deviations from beauty." The perfect familiarity with the subject which it everywhere exhibits, the largeness of its views, the irresistible weight of its arguments, and the felicity of its style, must always render it a favorite among Burke's speeches. The ministerial majority, however, and even the country at large, were deaf to his warnings. A part of his resolutions were lost by a successful motion for the previous question, and the rest were voted down by an overwhelming majority.

It is a singular circumstance, that the American war was from the first one of the most popular wars in which England was ever engaged. Opposition to it presented few hopes of official honor or popular favor.

"I confess, too," says Lord Rockingham in a letter to Burke dated September 24th, 1775, "that from every information which I receive, and which the observations made both by Lord John and Lord George [Cavendish], and also by the Duke of Manchester and Sir George Savile, all confirm, the real fact is, that the generality of the people of England are now led away by the misrepresentations and arts of the ministry, the court, and their abettors; so that the violent measures towards America are fairly adopted and countenanced by a majority of individuals of all ranks, professions, or occupations in this country."

Burke, too, declared, in a letter to the Duke of Rich-

mond two days later, that he was “sensible of the shocking indifference and neutrality of a great part of the nation.” In another letter he laments over the degeneracy of the people, and says that the merchants “consider the American war not so much their calamity, as their resource in an inevitable distress.” Burke, however, was still the zealous champion of liberty, and on the 16th of November, 1775, he again came forward in behalf of the oppressed Colonists, with a motion for leave to bring in a bill “for composing the present troubles, and for quieting the minds of his Majesty’s subjects in America.” This motion he supported in another elaborate speech, which occupied more than three hours in the delivery; but upon a division it was defeated by a majority of two to one. In November of the following year he seconded Lord John Cavendish’s motion for a “revisal of all Acts of Parliament, by which his Majesty’s subjects in America think themselves aggrieved.” Upon this motion he spoke twice in the same evening,—the second time in reply to Wedderburne, then Solicitor-General; and on both occasions he is said to have spoken with great animation. The second speech, in particular, appears to have been one of his most brilliant and pointed productions.

The minority, which had long been feeble and almost powerless, had diminished so much of late, that upon Lord John Cavendish’s motion they only numbered 47 votes. In consequence of this result, Burke, Fox, and some of the other leaders of the party, strongly recommended a secession from Parliament. Early in January, 1777, Burke wrote an argumentative letter to Lord Rockingham upon the right and expediency of a secession under the existing circumstances. At the same time he drew up and enclosed to his Lordship an eloquent Address to the King, rehearsing in clear and dignified language the history of the American troubles, and strongly condemning the whole course of the ministerial policy; and he also prepared a Conciliatory Address to the Colonists designed for circulation upon this side of the Atlantic. But the plan of a general secession was not favorably received, and was only partially carried out. A few weeks later, Burke addressed a long and admirable letter to the

Sheriffs of Bristol upon the general subject of American affairs, with a special reference to the recent passage of a bill for the partial suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. This letter was at once published, and was not without effect in the country.

Shortly after the preparation of this letter a new question arose, which appeared to the Opposition leaders to afford a favorable opportunity for renewing their regular attendance in Parliament. On the 9th of April, Lord North brought down a message from the throne, representing for the second time in this reign that the king was laboring under pecuniary difficulties, and that the debts upon the Civil List amounted to more than £ 600,000. The debate in the Commons commenced a week after the message was delivered, and was conducted with much spirit on both sides. Burke now came forward in the character of an economical reformer; and in his speech in reply to Lord North he was very severe upon the noble lord for introducing the subject at a time when the country was already burdened with taxes, and proposing to add to their number. Beginning with a reply to the argument that the amount granted to the Civil List was insufficient for the expenses chargeable upon it, he went into a careful examination of the state of the Civil List under previous reigns, and in conclusion he maintained that "the debt incurred could not be for the royal dignity, but for purposes not fit to be avowed by the ministry, and therefore very fit to be inquired into by the House." During the next three years he seems not to have lost sight of the need of an economical and administrative reform; but the active part which he took in the various attacks on the ministry left him little time to mature a plan for the accomplishment of this object. It was not until February, 1780, that he brought forward a bill embodying the essential features of his plan. Among his principal speeches during this period were one in December, 1777, on Mr. Fox's motion for an Inquiry into the State of the Nation, and another in the following January in the debate on raising troops by subscription without the consent of Parliament. In February, 1778, he introduced a motion for an Address to the King relative to the employment of Indians

in the American war, and spoke for nearly three hours and a half with so much effect that one member expressed a desire that the speech might be affixed to all the church doors which contained the proclamation for a general fast. Many thought it superior to any previous speech of the great orator.* In May of the same year, he took a conspicuous part in the debates on the Irish Trade Bills, of which he was the most active and powerful supporter, though his constituents in Bristol were strongly opposed to them, and several of his principal friends wrote to him to express their dissatisfaction; and again in the same month he spoke at length upon Mr. Hartley's motion for putting an end to the war in America.

In the following year he took an equally important and conspicuous part in the discussions; but it is scarcely necessary or desirable to follow out in detail the history of his Parliamentary labors during this memorable year. It is sufficient to say, that in the numerous stormy debates upon the case of Admiral Keppel, and upon the various questions connected with the conduct of the American war, he was a prominent speaker, constantly assailing the ministry with argument, ridicule, and invective. In common with the other leaders of the Rockingham party, he vehemently espoused the cause of Keppel, and bitterly assailed Sir Hugh Palliser, Keppel's most active enemy. Not content with defending the Whig Admiral in Parliament, Burke went down to Portsmouth with Lord Rockingham, Fox, and other leaders of the party, to attend the court-martial convened for the trial of Keppel. Burke's son, who had just begun to keep his terms in London as a student of law, accompanied them; and both father and son were constant attendants in the court during the trial. So deeply sensible was the veteran warrior of Burke's sympathy, that he presented him with a portrait of himself by Sir Joshua Reynolds, which afterwards called forth one of the most striking passages in the "Letter to a Noble Lord."

* Strangers were excluded from the galleries during this debate, and no adequate report of Burke's speech is extant; but enough remains to show that it contained many passages which must have sent a thrill through even the most sluggish assembly. Altogether, it seems to have been singularly brilliant in style and cogent in argument.

“I ever looked on Lord Keppel,” he says near the close of this celebrated production, “as one of the greatest and best men of his age; and I loved and cultivated him accordingly. He was much in my heart, and I believe I was in his to the very last beat. It was at his trial at Portsmouth that he gave me this picture. With what zeal and anxious affection I attended him through that his agony of glory, what part my son took in the early flush and enthusiasm of his virtue, and the pious passion with which he attached himself to all my connections, with what prodigality we both squandered ourselves in courting almost every sort of enmity for his sake, I believe he felt just as I should have felt such a friendship on such an occasion.”

On the 15th of December in the same year he gave notice of his long- meditated plan of economical reform in a bold and manly speech, attributing all the grievances under which the country suffered to the “fatal and overgrown influence of the crown.” A few weeks later, on the 11th of February, 1780, he brought forward his proposed plan; and so persuasive was his eloquence on this occasion that even Lord North said it was one of the ablest speeches he had ever heard, and such as he believed no other member of the House was capable of making. Lord George Gordon alone rose to oppose the motion, and even insisted upon dividing the House; but no other member voted with him, and leave was accordingly granted to bring in a bill “for the better regulation of his Majesty’s Civil Establishments, and of certain Public Offices, for the limitation of pensions, and the suppression of sundry useless, expensive, and inconvenient places, and for applying the moneys saved thereby to the public service.” Burke’s speech on this motion is printed entire in his Works, is a masterpiece of ingenious and weighty argument, and by some persons is even now regarded as the finest of his productions. It has, indeed, many splendid passages; but too much of it is disfigured by the faults of his later manner. Still it is easy to see how strong an impression it must have produced upon those who heard it. A great historian, who then occupied a silent seat in Parliament, and filled one of the offices which Burke proposed to abolish, has told us with what emotions he listened to this speech. “Never,” said Gibbon at a subsequent period, “can I forget the delight with which that

diffusive and ingenious orator, Mr. Burke, was heard by all sides of the house, and even by those whose existence he proscribed." Three days after this speech was delivered, Burke also obtained leave to bring in bills for the sale of the forest and other crown lands, with certain exceptions, for more perfectly uniting to the crown the Principality of Wales and the County Palatine of Chester, and for uniting to the crown the Duchy and County Palatine of Lancaster. He also moved for leave to bring in a bill for uniting the Duchy of Cornwall to the crown, but, objection being made, this motion was withdrawn. At first these measures were received with great favor, and Burke acquired an immense popularity. Gradually, however, the opposition to the proposed reform began to gain strength and courage. The result was a severe and protracted struggle. The clause in the first bill for abolishing the office of Third Secretary of State was the first upon which the House divided, and it was lost by a vote of 201 to 208. The clause abolishing the Board of Trade was carried by a majority of only eight votes; and after the rejection of a clause for reforming some of the offices in the royal household, Burke appears to have lost nearly all interest in the further progress of the bill, though he spoke several times in the subsequent debates. In the mean time, and in consequence of the opposition to Burke's plan, Mr. Dunning brought forward his celebrated motion, "that the influence of the crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished," and in his opening speech he paid a merited tribute to his friend's "uncommon zeal, unrivalled industry, astonishing abilities, and invincible perseverance." Burke took no part in this debate, but he was one of the majority who voted in favor of Mr. Dunning's declaration.

On the 1st of September Parliament was suddenly dissolved; and, in consequence of the shortness of the interval allowed for the elections, the ministry materially increased their strength in the new House. Burke once more offered himself as a candidate for the city of Bristol, and in a speech delivered in the Guildhall previously to the election he vindicated with consummate ability the course which he had recently pursued in Parliament. In the course of his remarks

he met and answered successively the various charges brought against him. Nor did he neglect to refer in just terms to the only proper rules which can govern the relations between the representative and his constituents.

“I did not obey your instructions,” he said. “No. I conformed to the instructions of truth and nature, and maintained your interest, against your opinions, with a constancy that became me. A representative worthy of you ought to be a person of stability. I am to look, indeed, to your opinions; but to such opinions as you and I must have five years hence. I was not to look to the flash of the day. I knew that you chose me, in my place, along with others, to be a pillar of the state, and not a weathercock on the top of the edifice, exalted for my levity and versatility, and of no use but to indicate the shiftings of every fashionable gale.”

But the opposition was too strong, and Burke, having satisfied himself that he could not be chosen, determined to withdraw from the contest before the commencement of the poll. Compelled again to seek a new avenue to Parliament, he once more took refuge in Lord Rockingham’s borough of Malton, from which he was promptly returned. After an animated struggle Fox was chosen for Westminster; and the Opposition to Lord North was strengthened by the election of two young men of scarcely less brilliant parts, who now entered Parliament for the first time, and who were destined to act a conspicuous part in history,—Richard Brinsley Sheridan and William Pitt.

The ministry was stronger in the new Parliament than it had been previously to the dissolution; but at length defeat and disaster to the British arms proved more powerful than the most eloquent lips. Lord North, too, became weary of office, and ineffectually besought the king to allow him to resign; and such was his anxiety to be relieved of the constant struggle which so heavily taxed his good nature, that in the course of this year overtures were made to Lord Rockingham with a view of enlarging the basis of the ministry. Some negotiations were accordingly carried on between the two parties; but the differences in regard to the details of the proposed arrangement were so great that the scheme failed. With the opening of the session the struggle was renewed with fresh

ardor; and so strongly was Lord North pressed by the king to remain in office, that it was not until March, 1782, that the Opposition succeeded in displacing the ministry. In this memorable struggle Burke was among the foremost speakers, taking an important part in the discussions upon the appointment of Sir Hugh Palliser as Governor of Greenwich Hospital, upon Lord North's propositions for the renewal of the East India Company's charter, upon the causes of the war in the Carnatic, upon the Public Accounts and the Ordnance Estimates, upon Mr. Hartley's bill for restoring peace with America, and upon the bill for reforming the Civil List, on which he spoke four times.

The struggle was now fast drawing to a close. In January, 1782, Mr. Fox brought forward a motion for an inquiry into "the causes of the want of success of his Majesty's naval forces during the war, and more particularly in the year 1781," and sustained it in a speech of great ability. So powerful were his arguments, and so strong had the minority become, that the ministers did not venture to oppose the inquiry. When the House went into committee upon the subject, Mr. Fox again spoke at length, attacking the conduct of the admiralty, and concluding with a resolution that "there had been gross mismanagement in the conduct of his Majesty's naval affairs in the year 1781"; but the motion was rejected by a majority of twenty-two. Burke did not take any conspicuous part in these debates; but a few weeks later, when General Conway brought forward a motion for putting an end to the war, he spoke at length, and with more than ordinary ability. The motion was defeated by only one vote. Alarmed at this result, the ministers at once determined to yield to the demands of the minority, so far at least as to enter into negotiations for peace. But such a course was not adapted to satisfy the Opposition; and on the 8th of March Lord John Cavendish introduced a series of resolutions, attributing the misfortunes of the war to "the want of foresight and ability in his Majesty's ministers." The motion was lost by a majority of ten. Still the feebleness of the ministry was so apparent, that the next week a motion was made that the House "can have no further confidence in the ministers who

have the direction of public affairs." This motion likewise failed; yet the Opposition felt so confident of success, that they gave immediate notice of their intention to renew the motion with the least possible delay. In the mean time Lord North determined to resign rather than continue the struggle; and having obtained the reluctant consent of the king, on the 20th he announced that the ministry was at an end.

Upon the resignation of Lord North, his Majesty sent for Lord Shelburne, whose views were less obnoxious to him than were those of the Rockingham Whigs, and offered him the first place in the government; but Lord Shelburne was true to his recent engagements with Lord Rockingham, and declined the proffered honor. After some delay the king was induced to communicate with Lord Rockingham; and at length a ministry was formed of which he became head. Lord Shelburne and Mr. Fox were made Secretaries of State,—the Third Secretaryship being abolished.* Lord John Cavendish became Chancellor of the Exchequer; the Duke of Grafton returned to office as Lord Privy Seal; Admiral Keppel, whose recent trial had aroused so great an excitement, was created a Viscount and made First Lord of the Admiralty; the Duke of Richmond was made Master-General of the Ordnance; and General Conway was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Forces, with a seat in the Cabinet. Lord Thurlow was unwisely retained in the Chancellorship, through the influence of the king and of Lord Shelburne. Burke was made Paymaster-General, an office which had been filled in previous administrations by the elder Pitt, Lord Holland, Lord North, and the brilliant and versatile Charles Townshend, and which in our own time has been adorned by the splendid abilities of Lord Macaulay. Among the other celebrated persons who were appointed to inferior places were Sheridan, Barré, and Thomas Townshend. The Duke of Portland was made Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; and Fox's intimate friend, Richard Fitzpatrick, accompanied him as Secretary.

* Upon Mr. Fox's appointment he became the ministerial leader in the House of Commons, and Burke's relative position in the party was much changed. He never recovered his former influence. So long as the Whig party remained unbroken, Fox continued its sole and undisputed leader.

The ministry thus included many persons of great talents, and it possessed in a considerable degree the confidence of the nation; but it also had elements of weakness which soon produced changes in its constitution, and finally led to its downfall. Dissensions and mutual jealousies showed themselves even before the new ministry took office. The continuance of Lord Thurlow in the Chancellorship was undoubtedly a fatal mistake; since he not only differed widely in principles from the two great party connections that shared the principal offices, but did not hesitate to oppose in Parliament with the utmost bitterness the measures agreed upon in the Cabinet. His continuance seems to have been demanded by the king, and was assented to by Lord Shelburne without previous consultation with the Rockingham Whigs. In the same manner Lord Shelburne added to the original list of the Cabinet the name of his own friend and supporter, John Dunning, who was made Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and raised to the peerage under the title of Lord Ashburton. This promotion excited the jealousy of the Rockingham party, though they acquiesced in it; and, in order to equalize the rewards, Sir Fletcher Norton, the late Speaker of the House of Commons, was also called to the Upper House, and created Lord Grantley. The same jealousy was likewise recognized in the disposition of other offices and honors; but the only pensions conferred by the new ministers were given to supporters of Lord Shelburne. Though sufficiently eager for places and titles, the Rockingham Whigs showed an honorable disregard for the mere emoluments of office. "The only jobs," said Mr. Fox after his rupture with Lord Shelburne, "in which the Rockingham administration were concerned, were jobs for two men, neither friendly to their persons nor principles."

The dissensions in the Cabinet were still more strongly felt in the negotiations at Paris for terminating the American war. There Lord Shelburne and Mr. Fox maintained separate agents, from the unfortunate circumstance that the negotiations with France and those with the United States belonged to different departments.* The mutual jealousies

* The gentleman appointed by Lord Shelburne to conduct the negotiations with Dr. Franklin was Mr. Richard Oswald, a respectable London merchant. He con-

which these agents felt were soon transferred by Mr. Grenville to England; and the result was that Fox at once conceived a violent distrust of his colleague. Mr. Grenville himself was greatly exasperated at what he considered double-dealing on the part of Lord Shelburne, and was anxious to throw up his mission. In addition to this cause of suspicion and distrust, Mr. Fox entertained an entirely different opinion from Lord Shelburne in regard to the basis on which the negotiations should be conducted, and he had been twice outvoted in the Cabinet upon this important question. Under these circumstances he declared his intention of resigning, and was prevented from doing so at once only by the illness of Lord Rockingham, which terminated fatally on the 1st of July, a little more than three months after the ministers took office.

The death of Lord Rockingham brought matters to a crisis. On the following day Lord Shelburne announced to his colleagues that the king desired him to accept the Treasury; and he added, that from the manner in which the offer was made it would be impossible for him to decline, though he should have preferred the appointment of one of Lord Rockingham's friends.* This announcement was received with but little favor by the other Whig leaders, who were zealous for the appointment of the Duke of Portland, at that time Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Finding the opposition of his colleagues so strong, Lord Shelburne begged that they would not determine upon any line of conduct until he had had an opportunity of conversing with his Majesty upon the subject. The king was resolute in resisting the dictation of the Whig aristocracy; and three days after the death of Lord Rockingham Mr. Fox resigned.

The resignation of Mr. Fox led to the most important results, and left a deep and permanent effect upon the political history of England. It separated men who had long acted

tinued in this mission until the negotiations were concluded. Mr. Fox's representative was Mr. Thomas Grenville, a younger son of the famous Chancellor of the Exchequer. After the appointment of Lord Shelburne as prime minister he was recalled at his own request.

* Lord Temple, however, states in a letter to his brother, Thomas Grenville, printed in the Buckingham Papers, that Lord Shelburne intimated to him a wish and intention to take the Treasury.

together in harmony; it divided and finally broke up the great Whig party; it brought forward a new and formidable rival to Mr. Fox; and it paved the way for his own memorable coalition with Lord North. The withdrawal of Mr. Fox and of Lord John Cavendish, who also resigned on account of his dislike of Lord Shelburne, was immediately followed by the resignation of Lord Robert Spencer, Burke, Sheridan, and most of their political and personal friends. The Duke of Richmond, Lord Camden, Lord Keppel, and General Conway, however, determined to continue in office. In the new arrangements rendered necessary by the appointment of Lord Shelburne as First Lord of the Treasury, and in consequence of these resignations, Mr. Thomas Townshend and Lord Grantham were made Secretaries of State. Colonel Barré succeeded Mr. Burke as Paymaster-General; and Mr. Dundas became Treasurer of the Navy. But a more important accession to Lord Shelburne's strength was the appointment of William Pitt, the second son of Lord Chatham, then a young man of twenty-three, to succeed Lord John Cavendish as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The subject of the ministerial changes was speedily brought forward in Parliament, and formed the principal topic in a debate to which the pension conferred upon Colonel Barré by the late administration had given rise.* In the course of this debate Fox made a violent attack upon the new ministers, stigmatizing them as "men whom neither promises could bind nor principles of honor could secure; they would abandon fifty principles for the sake of power, and forget fifty promises when they were no longer necessary to their ends." To this diatribe he added: "He had no doubt but that, to secure themselves in the power which they had by the labor of others obtained, they would now strive to strengthen themselves by any means which corruption could procure; and he expected to see that, in a very short time, they would be joined

* Lord Shelburne subsequently stated in the House of Lords that the pension was conferred upon Colonel Barré at the recommendation of Lord Rockingham, to compensate him for resigning his pretensions to the Pay Office in favor of Burke. On the very next day Burke indignantly denied the assertion in the House of Commons, and his denial was confirmed by Lord John Cavendish and Mr. Fox.

by those men whom that House had precipitated from their seats." Burke was equally violent, and "called heaven and earth to witness that he verily believed the present ministry would be fifty times worse than that of the noble Lord who lately had been reprobated and removed."* The debate was closed by Mr. Lee, the late Solicitor-General, who commented upon the youth and inexperience of the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, declaring that, "though the honorable gentleman would adorn any scene in which his part was properly cast, yet he did not think the confidence of the people would be much increased by putting the complicated business of the finances into the hands of a boy." The speeches of Mr. Fox and his friends were certainly not wanting in violence and bitterness; but it must be conceded that they do not present a very satisfactory defence of the course taken by the Rockingham Whigs. It is only by the light of documents which have recently been published for the first time, that we are able to perceive the real and justifiable grounds of that action.

Shortly after this debate Parliament was prorogued; and during the recess the ministers industriously prosecuted the negotiations at Paris. After much delay the terms of the peace were adjusted; and on the 30th of November, 1782, a provisional treaty was signed by the Commissioners of Great Britain and the United States, but without the knowledge of the French government. Subsequently, on the 20th of January, 1783, preliminary articles of peace with France and Spain were also signed; and before the close of the month the three treaties were laid before Parliament. In the mean time it had become evident that, in order to carry on the government, the ministry must strengthen itself by gaining support from one or both of the other parties. According to an estimate circulated at the time, the ministers could count only 140 votes in their favor. The friends of Lord North numbered 120; and Mr. Fox was at the head of a party smaller than either of the other two, but superior in talents, and numbering 90 votes. In this balanced state of parties a union of any

* In one of his letters to Mr. Roget, Sir Samuel Romilly says, in reference to Burke's speech, that he spoke "with uncommon warmth,—uncommon rage I should rather say."

two would leave its opponents in a decided minority. Accordingly various negotiations were opened, all of which failed of success excepting one for a coalition between Lord North and Mr. Fox. The first step towards the formation of this celebrated coalition was taken by George North, Lord North's son, and he was warmly seconded by Lord John Townshend. Burke also approved of the coalition; and according to Lord John Townshend, Sheridan was "one of the most eager and clamorous for it," though he afterwards boasted that he had always been opposed to it. The immediate result of this junction was the resignation of the ministers upon the passage of an amendment to the Address in answer to the King's Speech communicating the preliminary articles of peace.

The coalition, however, did not find it so easy to get into office as they had anticipated. A ministerial interregnum of unexampled length followed, in consequence of the king's unwillingness to admit Mr. Fox and his friends to office. Finally, on the 24th of March, Mr. Coke, the celebrated agriculturist, gave notice for the second time that he should move for an inquiry into the causes of the delay in forming a ministry, unless Mr. Pitt would say that he had accepted the seals of the Treasury. In answer to this question Pitt replied that he had not taken office, and was not aware that any arrangement had been made. The proposed Address was then moved, and adopted; and on the following day a vague answer was returned. But in consequence of its adoption, the negotiations with the coalition were once more resumed; and finally, after many delays and interruptions, his Majesty yielded to the necessity imposed upon him.* Throughout

* The king's feelings towards his new ministers were exceedingly bitter. In a letter to Lord Temple dated April 1st, 1783, and published in the first volume of the Buckingham Papers, his Majesty says: "Judge, therefore, of the uneasiness of my mind, at having been thwarted in every attempt to keep the administration out of the hands of the most unprincipled coalition the annals of this or any other nation can equal. I have withheld it till not a single man is willing to come to my assistance, and till the House of Commons has taken every step but insisting on this faction being by name elected ministers." In another place his Majesty intimates his intention of getting rid of his new ministers as soon as possible. "I hope," he says, "many months will not elapse before the Grenvilles, the Pitts, and other men of ability and character, will relieve me from a situation that nothing could have compelled me to submit to, but the supposition that no other means remained of preventing the public finances from being materially affected."

this protracted struggle Burke does not appear to have taken any active part, — probably on account of his being engaged at that time in the preparation of the Ninth Report on Indian Affairs; but that he approved of the course pursued by the coalition is sufficiently clear from the fact that he at once accepted a place under it.

On the 2d of April, thirty-seven days after the resignation of Lord Shelburne, the coalition ministry took office. In that famous ministry the Duke of Portland was First Lord of the Treasury, Lord North and Mr. Fox were the two Secretaries of State, Lord John Cavendish was Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Stormont President of the Council, Lord Carlisle Privy Seal, and Admiral Keppel First Lord of the Admiralty. Lord Thurlow was deprived of the Chancellorship, and the Great Seal was put into commission. Burke was again made Paymaster-General; and the other offices were divided among the adherents of the two Secretaries. So ill-assorted a union had not been seen since the second ministry of Lord Chatham, which Burke had admirably characterized some years before in an often-quoted passage. “He made an administration,” we are told in the speech on American Taxation, “so checkered and speckled; he put together a piece of joinery, so crossly indented and whimsically dovetailed; a cabinet so variously inlaid; such a piece of diversified mosaic; such a tessellated pavement without cement; here a bit of black stone, and there a bit of white; patriots and courtiers, king’s friends and republicans; Whigs and Tories; treacherous friends and open enemies; — that it was, indeed, a very curious show; but utterly unsafe to touch, and unsure to stand on.”

It was natural that the country should regard the coalition with but little favor. “Unless a real good government is the consequence,” wrote Fox’s friend and kinsman, Richard Fitzpatrick, “nothing can justify it to the public.” Even this poor justification it was not destined to have; and in the end it was ruinous to the reputation and future usefulness of those most largely concerned in it. It doomed Fox to more than twenty years of fruitless opposition; for the king never forgave or forgot the constraint put upon him at this time. Nor

was Fox compensated in public estimation for the ill-will with which he was regarded by George III. The recollection of the coalition and of his course upon the India Bill clung to him for many years, and both were associated in the public mind with dishonor and an eager grasping for power. The coalition of Lord North and Mr. Fox is only a more conspicuous illustration of the general truth which all history teaches, that coalitions are rarely if ever popular. It added nothing to the reputation of Lord North, although, as Horace Walpole wittily observed, “he got himself whitewashed by his bitterest enemies.” In the case of Mr. Fox it has always given his eulogists infinite trouble; and very few persons at the present day will think of defending his course. Nor did even Burke’s reputation escape without suffering some severe and damaging attacks. The most important of these was based upon his course in reference to two clerks in the Pay Office, named Powell and Bembridge, who had been dismissed by the late Paymaster-General on account of alleged malpractices. When Burke returned to office he immediately reappointed them; and on the 2d of May the subject was brought to the notice of the House of Commons. A brief and animated conversation ensued, in the course of which one member remarked, “that, when he heard from the highest authority, that two considerable clerks in office had been dismissed for gross misbehavior, and that they were afterwards restored, he could not help looking upon their restoration as a gross and daring insult to the public.” Burke immediately rose in a violent fit of passion, exclaiming, “It is a gross and daring —”; but before he could finish the sentence Sheridan drew him down into his seat, “lest his heat,” says the Parliamentary History, “should betray him into some intemperate expressions that might offend the House.” No action was taken at this time; but the subject was again brought before the House several times before it was finally settled. Meanwhile Powell committed suicide; and though the House refused to condemn Burke’s conduct, the feeling upon the subject was so strong that his friends advised him to accept Bembridge’s resignation. He accordingly did so; and in the following month Bembridge was

convicted by the Court of King's Bench upon a charge of conniving at the concealment of more than £ 48,000, and was sentenced to pay a fine and to be imprisoned for six months.

In the course of the year, and subsequently to his return to office, Burke presented to the House two masterly Reports from the Select Committee on the Affairs of India, designed to prepare the way for Mr. Fox's East India Bill. In the first of these reports he gave an elaborate survey of the actual condition of the East India Company's affairs abroad, of the relations of Great Britain and India, and of the effects of the revenue investment of the Company. He then discussed at great length the trade and government of India, everywhere exhibiting the most perfect familiarity with his subject, and sharply criticising the conduct of Hastings, at that time Governor-General. The Eleventh Report followed at a later date, and is almost exclusively devoted to the conduct of Hastings, which is thoroughly scrutinized and elaborately described. From the date of these Reports to the close of his Parliamentary career, Indian affairs were among the chief subjects which engaged Burke's thoughts; and the part which he took in them forms one of the most important chapters in his life.

On the 19th of November, Mr. Fox moved for leave to bring in two bills, one "for vesting the affairs of the East India Company in the hands of certain Commissioners," and the other "for the better government of the territorial possessions and dependencies in India." These bills had been drawn with much care, and were designed to effect a radical reform in Indian affairs. By whom they were originally drafted is uncertain. It has sometimes been asserted that the first sketch was prepared by Burke, and that the bills were then drawn by Mr. Pigot, afterward Attorney-General under Lord Grenville; but the evidence for this statement is not conclusive. It is known, however, that Lord North, Lord Loughborough, and Mr. Pigot were consulted in regard to the details; and there can be no doubt that Burke also contributed his advice and information. After a very able and elaborate speech by Mr. Fox, discussing the affairs of the

East at much length, and dwelling with great severity upon the policy of Hastings, and a few remarks by other members, leave was granted to bring in the proposed bills. Accordingly two days afterward Mr. Fox introduced his first bill. The motion for the second reading was opposed by Mr. William Wyndham Grenville and others ; but it seems to have been carried without a division, and on the 27th the great struggle commenced. Fox opened the debate in a speech even more powerful and elaborate than that which he delivered upon the introduction of the bill, sharply assailing the management of the East India Company, and declaring “ that, if he should fall in this, he should fall in a great and glorious cause, struggling not only for the Company, but for the people of Great Britain and India,—for many, many millions of souls.” The motion that the bill be referred to a committee of the whole House was opposed by Mr. Pitt, the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, but it was carried by a majority of 109. On the 1st of December the debate was resumed, upon a motion that the House resolve itself into a committee upon the bill. The opposition was very ably conducted by William Pitt, Dundas, Thomas Pitt, and others. On the other side, the bill was supported by Fox, Lord John Cavendish, Burke, and other prominent leaders of the coalition. It was in this debate that Burke delivered his celebrated panegyric on Mr. Fox, at the close of a splendid argument in favor of the bill, which was afterwards written out and published. “ Let him use his time,” said Burke. “ Let him give the whole length of the reins to his benevolence. He is now on a great eminence, where the eyes of mankind are turned to him. He may live long, he may do much. But here is the summit. He never can exceed what he does this day.”

In the division the ministry was sustained by a majority of 114. On the 8th of December, the third reading was carried by a majority of 106 ; and on the following day the bill was presented at the bar of the House of Lords by Mr. Fox, attended by a great number of Commons. Upon the first reading Lords Thurlow and Temple took occasion to avow a strong opposition to the bill ; and not only did they oppose it in debate, but they also made use of their influence with the

king to overthrow its authors. The king eagerly availed himself of an opportunity which seemed so propitious for gratifying his resentment, and previously to the second reading he placed a written memorandum in the hands of Lord Temple, "that he should deem those who should vote for it, not only not his friends, but his enemies ; and that, if Lord Temple could put this in stronger words, he had full authority to do so." In consequence of this interference of his Majesty some of the peers withdrew their proxies from the ministers, and others who had been supposed to be friendly to the bill voted with the Opposition. Upon the 15th of December an adjournment was carried against the ministry by a majority of 87 to 79. On the same day the king's interference formed the subject of a debate in the House of Commons, and a resolution was introduced, "that it is now necessary to declare, that to report any opinion, or any pretended opinion, of his Majesty, upon any bill or other proceeding depending in either House of Parliament, with a view to influence the votes of the members, is a high crime and misdemeanor, derogatory to the honor of the crown, a breach of the fundamental privileges of Parliament, and subversive of the constitution of this country." This resolution, which was strenuously opposed by William Pitt, was carried by a majority of 73. Two days afterward the bill was rejected in the Upper House by a majority of 95 to 76 ; and at twelve o'clock on the following night a message was sent to the two Secretaries of State by the king, "that they should deliver up the seals of their offices, and send them by the Under Secretaries, Mr. Frazer and Mr. Nepean, as a personal interview on the occasion would be disagreeable to him." The seals were immediately given to Earl Temple ; and the next day the other members of the Cabinet were dismissed.

Upon the dismissal of the ministers William Pitt was made First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Marquis of Carmarthen Secretary of State for the Foreign Department, and Lord Sydney Secretary for the Home Department. Lord Thurlow returned to the Chancellorship. The other Cabinet Ministers were Earl Gower, Lord Howe, and the Duke of Rutland, who was afterward

appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Lord Temple declined to accept a place in the Cabinet in consequence of the indignation excited by his unconstitutional conduct. In inferior places were Kenyon, afterward Chief Justice, William Wyndham Grenville, Henry Dundas, and Lord Mulgrave. With the accession of the new ministers commenced another remarkable struggle between the two great English parties. Upon one side was Fox, at the head of a great majority of the House of Commons, eager to drive from power the ministers who had obtained office by such disgraceful means. On the other side was Pitt, sustained by all the weight of the king's personal influence, equally determined not to suffer any successful attack upon the royal prerogatives. In this unequal contest Fox was finally defeated ; and the great party which he had so long led dwindled to a mere handful of attached and devoted followers.

Having failed in their attempt to reform the abuses of the Indian government by means of Mr. Fox's bills, and hopelessly defeated in their long and wasting struggle to regain power, the Whig leaders determined to bring to punishment the authors of the abuses which they had so strongly condemned. On the 28th of February, 1785, Mr. Fox brought forward a motion for papers relative to the course pursued by the ministers in regard to the private debts of the Nabob of Arcot. In the course of the debate Burke delivered a powerful speech upon the particular question then at issue, displaying throughout a familiarity with the affairs of India which few persons then possessed. This speech is in some respects one of the most remarkable of Burke's Parliamentary efforts, and, though disfigured by his worst faults of style, it contains passages of the most brilliant and moving eloquence. Still the motion was lost by a majority of 164 to 69. In April of the following year he presented to the House of Commons an elaborate series of Articles of Charge against Hastings, rehearsing under appropriate heads the various topics which entered into the charges, and drawing out in detail the special offences committed under each. In May Hastings was heard at the bar of the House in reply to the charges ; and during the course of the year they were at various times thoroughly

discussed in committee of the whole House. The several speeches of Burke on the Rohilla charge, of Fox on the Benares charge, and of Sheridan on the Begum charge, in particular, were masterpieces of brilliant invective and cogent argument. On the 3d of April, 1787, it was voted that the articles of charge furnished ground for impeaching Warren Hastings, Esq., late Governor-General of Bengal, and that a committee of twenty should be appointed to prepare articles of impeachment. Burke was placed at the head of this committee ; and among his associates were Fox, Sheridan, Windham, Philip Francis, George North, and Charles Grey, then a young man of twenty-three, just beginning a long and faithful career in the service of the state, to be crowned forty-five years later by the passage of the Reform Bill. The Committee reported with considerable despatch, and on the 10th of May it was voted to impeach Hastings, and “that Mr. Burke do go to the Lords, and at their bar, in the name of the House of Commons, do impeach Warren Hastings, Esq., late Governor-General of Bengal, of High Crimes and Misdemeanors.” In pursuance of this vote Burke, attended by a majority of the Commons, immediately proceeded to the bar of the House of Lords, and there impeached Hastings in the prescribed form.

On the 13th of February, 1788, the trial commenced in Westminster Hall, and it was continued with numerous intermissions until April, 1795, when the Lords voted that the charges were not proved. Burke's closing argument, which lasted for nine days, had been delivered in May and June of the preceding year ; and immediately afterward, on the 20th of June, 1794, the House of Commons, on the motion of Mr. Pitt, passed a vote of thanks to “the managers of the impeachment against Warren Hastings, Esq., for their faithful management in their discharge of the trust reposed in them.” This was the last day on which Burke appeared in his seat as a member of Parliament. Having conducted the trial to a close, so far as it depended upon the managers, he immediately applied for the stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds, and resigned his seat. It has formed no part of our intention to describe the details of this memorable trial ; for that duty

has long since been discharged by the greatest of living historians, in a manner which no subsequent writer can hope to rival. Nor is it necessary to dwell upon Burke's connection with the trial. It is sufficient to say, that neither in the House of Commons when vindicating the propriety of his own course as a manager or seeking to obtain new evidence against the great culprit, nor when arguing before the Peers, did he spare any exertion to secure the punishment of Hastings. The voluminous collection of his speeches in Westminster Hall, with all their wealth of fancy and imagination, their splendor of invective, and their weight of argument, and the still more numerous speeches which he delivered in the House of Commons upon questions growing out of the trial, are an imperishable monument of his zeal, eloquence, and fidelity on this memorable occasion. To Burke, Hastings was, indeed, the incarnation of all the misgovernment India had ever suffered from Englishmen ; and though we may condemn the extravagance of language with which he advocated a just cause, it may be doubted whether any statesman was ever actuated by purer motives than he was in the prosecution of Hastings. Yet he became extremely unpopular, and was constantly assailed with every form of obloquy, on account of the part which he took. Madame D'Arblay has recorded in her Diary the feelings with which she saw Burke enter Westminster Hall, and listened to his eloquence.

“I shuddered, and drew involuntarily back,” she says, “when, as the doors were flung open, I saw Mr. Burke, as head of the Committee, make his solemn entry. He held a scroll in his hand, and walked alone, his brow knit with corroding care and deep laboring thought, — a brow how different to that which had proved so alluring to my warmest admiration when first I met him ! So highly as he had been my favorite, so captivating as I had found his manners and conversation in our first acquaintance, and so much as I had owed to his zeal and kindness to me and my affairs in its progress, — how did I grieve to behold him now the cruel prosecutor (such to me he appeared) of an injured and innocent man ! Were talents such as these exercised in the service of truth, unbiassed by party and prejudice, how could we sufficiently applaud their exalted possessor ? But though frequently he made me tremble by his strong and horrible representations, his own violence recovered me, by stigmatizing his assertions with personal ill-will and

designing illiberality. Yet, at times, I confess, with all that I felt, wished, and thought concerning Mr. Hastings, the whirlwind of his eloquence nearly drew me into its vortex."

Doubtless Madame D'Arblay in describing her own feelings has faithfully represented those of a large number of Burke's fair auditors. But he was subjected to much harsher criticism than this. The Parliamentary debates bear abundant testimony to the activity and bitterness of Hastings's friends. Once, indeed, in May, 1789, they succeeded in passing a direct vote of censure upon Burke's conduct as a manager, and in several instances placed serious obstacles in his way.

In the long and fierce struggle between the ministry and the Opposition growing out of the king's illness and the introduction of the Regency Bill, Burke took a very earnest part, in support of the theory of Lord Loughborough and Mr. Fox, and in opposition to Mr. Pitt's doctrine that the Prince of Wales had no better title to the Regency than any other individual in the kingdom. On one occasion, in particular, he came into sharp collision with Mr. Pitt, who replied in his usual supercilious manner, but with scathing severity. Following these angry discussions a new question arose, which divided Burke's attention, alienated him from the friends with whom he had so long acted, and threw him into new and strange company. From the first outbreak of the French Revolution, Fox, Sheridan, and Grey espoused the cause of the Revolutionists. Burke, on the other hand, departing from the principles of his earlier years, and pardoning very little to the spirit of liberty, entered warmly into the support of the monarchy. The result was a violent rupture of all those ties of friendship and affection which had so long united him with Fox in the common advocacy of common objects. In his place in Parliament and by numerous pamphlets he assailed with great and increasing acrimony the principles and the doings of the Revolutionists, and sharply condemned the course of those who sympathized with them. His first and least violent publication upon the subject was a pamphlet entitled "Reflections on the Revolution in France," which was given to the world in the latter part of the year 1790. It was certainly a very able and brilliant argument on the side

which Burke had espoused with all the ardor of a recent convert; but few readers can fail to notice how much its whole tone and spirit are at variance with his former writings. It called out numerous replies, of which all but two are forgotten, Paine's "Rights of Man," and the "Vindiciæ Gallicæ" of Sir James Mackintosh, a work which at once gave its author a reputation and opened the way for a splendid career.

On the 6th of May in the following year occurred the memorable rupture between Burke and Fox. The former had already broken with Sheridan, in consequence of a difference of opinion in regard to the French Revolution; and in a debate on the Army Estimates in 1790 the want of sympathy between Burke and Fox had also been clearly shown. With the lapse of time the opinions of both strengthened, and their differences widened. Finally, in the course of a debate upon the Quebec Government Bill, they came to an open rupture, under circumstances of painful acrimony, which might well move the stoutest heart. "It certainly was indiscretion," said Burke, "at any period, but especially at his time of life, to provoke enemies, or give his friends occasion to desert him; yet if his firm and steady adherence to the British constitution placed him in such a dilemma, he would risk all, and, as public duty and public prudence taught him, with his last breath exclaim, 'Fly from the French constitution.'" At this point Fox whispered, "There is no loss of friends." Burke immediately answered, that "there was a loss of friends; he knew the price of his conduct; he had done his duty at the price of his friend; their friendship was at an end." After such a termination of a personal friendship which had lasted for more than a quarter of a century, commencing even before Fox entered public life, it was natural that both should be deeply moved. The Parliamentary History tells us that, when Fox rose to reply, "his mind was so much agitated, and his heart so much affected by what had fallen from Mr. Burke, that it was some minutes before he could proceed. Tears trickled down his cheeks, and he strove in vain to give utterance to feelings that dignified and exalted his nature. The sensibility of every member in the House appeared uncommonly excited on the occasion." Superior as Burke was to

Fox in intellectual force, it must be conceded that the latter possessed a sweetness of temper to which the great political philosopher could never lay claim. A coolness must necessarily have existed between them in consequence of the divergence of their opinions ; but Fox would certainly have maintained friendly relations with his former teacher and ally, if Burke's vehemence would have permitted it.

Two months after this memorable breach Burke published another pamphlet on the Revolution, the “Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs,” designed to show that his own opinions were in accordance with established Whig principles. In December of the same year he drew up and submitted to the ministry a brief paper, entitled “Thoughts on French Affairs,” in which he discussed the character and aims of the Revolution, and maintained that the principles then prevalent in France were dangerous and hostile to other governments ; and in the course of the next four years he drew up and submitted to the ministry several other papers. Among them were the “Heads for Consideration on the Present State of Affairs,” and the “Thoughts and Details on Scarcity,” the latter of which was presented to Mr. Pitt in November, 1795, and discussed with great ability the existing condition of the agricultural population, with some remarks on the evils to be apprehended from the spread of French principles. The “Observations on the Conduct of the Minority,” in which he sharply criticised the course of Mr. Fox, under fifty-four specifications, and which was drawn up in 1793, was also privately submitted to the Duke of Portland, and was originally published without Burke's consent or knowledge. In 1796 he published his eloquent and touching “Letter to a Noble Lord,” in reply to the attacks upon him in the House of Lords by the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale, in consequence of the recent grant of three pensions to him by the ministry. This celebrated production has been much and justly admired, and certainly few even of Burke's writings are more remarkable specimens of mingled argument, invective, pathos, low conceits, and lofty eloquence. This was followed by three “Letters on a Regicide Peace,” the last of which was passing through the press at

the time of his death ; and a fourth letter was also in preparation at the same time, and was published in his collected Works.

Though Burke was thus busy with his pen, he was not idle in Parliament during the years which intervened between his rupture with Mr. Fox and his withdrawal from public life. In May, 1792, he strongly opposed a reform of the representation in Parliament, in the debate upon Mr. Grey's notice of a motion on that subject; and a few days later he spoke at length in opposition to Mr. Fox's motion for leave to bring in a bill to repeal and alter certain statutes which weighed heavily upon the Unitarian Dissenters. After this time, however, his speeches had reference almost exclusively to the impeachment of Hastings, the conduct of the war with France, and the measures of domestic coercion by which the ministry sought to quench the rising complaints of the people. Though often marked by his accustomed power, these speeches show how completely Burke's imagination had gained the victory over his reasoning faculties. The famous dagger scene was only a more conspicuous illustration of the ardor of imagination and vehemence of tone which characterized nearly all his Parliamentary efforts at this time.

At length Burke's health gave way under these incessant labors, and under the burden of grief laid upon him by the death of his son on the 2d of August, 1794. This blow fell with terrible severity upon the veteran statesman, and from that time his own strength began to decay. It was in vain that he sought relief from the waters of Bath, where he spent a part of the winter and spring of 1797. As summer approached, all hope of recovery vanished; but it was not thought that his life was in immediate danger. He returned to Beaconsfield at the end of May ; and there he died on the 9th of July following, calmly and peacefully, with a blessing on his lips, and the last words of one of Addison's admirable essays on the immortality of the soul still lingering in his ears. On the 15th he was buried in Beaconsfield church, in the same grave in which had recently been laid the mortal remains of his brother and his son. The pall was borne by eight eminent noblemen and commoners, among whom were the Dukes of

Devonshire and Portland, Earl Fitzwilliam, nephew and heir of the Marquis of Rockingham, Mr. Windham, and Lord Loughborough; and the funeral was attended by a large concourse of the neighboring gentry. Fox, with characteristic generosity, proposed that the body of his former friend and recent antagonist should be interred in that venerable abbey where moulder the perishable remains of so much of England's true grandeur; but the terms of Burke's will did not permit such an honor, and it was declined.

In considering the relations of Burke with his contemporaries, it is important to observe that, notwithstanding the admiration which many of his speeches excited, he was never a favorite speaker in the House of Commons. His indiscriminate eulogists, indeed, have often attempted to overrule the popular impression on this point. Yet it remains clear and indisputable that those magnificent orations, which received the plaudits of the most competent critics in his own day, and which stir the blood of every reader now with a livelier pulsation, were often delivered to empty benches or to unwilling and inattentive listeners. Goldsmith's famous distich was not a mere figment of the imagination; and Burke's speeches were often interrupted by the impatient movements and violent coughing of members. Nor was this interruption caused solely by the desire on the part of his hearers to secure good English dinners. Their disorderly conduct frequently showed that they had left the House for a less reputable purpose. Burke spoke with a marked brogue; his voice was always sharp and shrill, and in his more passionate appeals it became a scream. Undoubtedly the intemperance of his manner in speaking, and the too great frequency of his speeches, contributed to weaken his immediate influence over the House. But it is also obvious that his personal and party connections were not such as to give him great popularity and weight in the country. When he entered public life, he allied himself with the party of Lord Rockingham, perhaps the most aristocratic connection in English history. When the first Rockingham ministry was broken up a few months afterward, the party fell into a small minority; and through the whole course of the American war it was exceedingly unpopular both in Par-

liament and throughout the country. During Lord Rockingham's second ministry, Burke held a lucrative appointment, though he was not in the Cabinet; but upon the death of his noble patron he followed Mr. Fox into retirement, and soon afterward he advocated the famous coalition with Lord North. In the new ministry he again held a subordinate place, which he resigned on the dismissal of the ministers. From that time until his rupture with Mr. Fox he was in a minority which daily grew weaker and more unpopular. After this memorable breach Burke stood alone. He had separated from his old friends, and he had not cordially united with his old opponents. It is clear, therefore, that at no time was his position such as to give him much official weight, or any direct influence over the great body of his contemporaries. At no time was he personally popular, excepting at that comparatively brief period when he was engaged on the question of economical reform. Yet he took a very active part in devising and defending the plans adopted by his political friends. Fox himself acknowledged the weight of his obligations to Burke; and the influence which that great man frankly avowed had been of eminent value to him, was not wholly unfelt by others. It may, indeed, seem strange, that, when Burke's friends came into office, they never gave him any place in the Cabinet; but it must not be forgotten that he was regarded by many as a mere adventurer,—that he had neither birth, fortune, nor powerful family connections. The principal offices in the state were considered as in some measure belonging to the great families which had upheld the Revolution Settlement, and the chief places in the government were reserved for the scions of those houses. The great political philosopher, therefore, who had labored with such untiring zeal in defence of Whig principles, always gave precedence to the mere men of social position.

It is certain that Burke's reputation has steadily increased since his death; yet it is a noteworthy circumstance, that even now he is held in higher admiration in America than in England. Nor need we be surprised at this, since we stand in the relation of a more remote posterity to Burke than do the English people, and are free from the disturbing influences

which must necessarily be felt by English writers. In England family traditions have still sufficient vitality to color the popular impression of Burke and his contemporaries. It was natural that the immediate descendants of those who were brought into contact or collision with him should inherit the opinions of his own day. In many instances, as in the case of the late Lord Holland, the influence of these transmitted opinions has very largely affected contemporary judgments. Added to this, Burke was always a zealous partisan, and in attempting to measure his powers English writers have attached a chief importance to his opinions on party questions of comparatively temporary moment. Upon this side of the Atlantic we are not influenced by these personal and party considerations, and are, therefore, more attracted by the essential and immutable principles which he always connected with the discussion even of the most unimportant party questions. In other words, it is more easy and natural for American readers to regard Burke as a great political philosopher than as a partisan; and under these circumstances we are sometimes apt to consider him exclusively in the former capacity, forgetting that he united both characters. In the one character of a political philosopher he stands unrivalled among English statesmen. In the other, as a mere party leader, he was certainly inferior to many of his contemporaries.

The real value of Burke's writings does not consist in the soundness of his views on the particular questions discussed in them, nor in the general harmony and consistency of his opinions. Few English statesmen, indeed, are less entitled to the praise of consistency. His earlier and his later views are often directly antagonistic; and, as Lord Brougham has well observed, "It would, indeed, be difficult to select one leading principle or prevailing sentiment in Mr. Burke's latest writings, to which something extremely adverse may not be found in his former, we can hardly say his early, works; excepting only on the subject of Parliamentary reform." But whatever may be the immediate question before him, he always brings to its discussion a vast amount of information upon every collateral topic. We see at once that his arguments are drawn from a long and careful study of the abstract

principles of political science; and however doubtful or fallacious may be the particular application of these principles, their real importance cannot be questioned, nor has any statesman of modern times clothed his arguments in more brilliant language. In that rich and exuberant rhetoric which is everywhere colored by an imagination more lofty and impassioned than any other great statesman has ever possessed, familiar truths assume a new force and vitality, and even the most questionable views present themselves to the mind with a persuasive appeal which cannot be easily resisted. It is, we conceive, because all of Burke's political writings deal more or less directly with general principles, and are cast in a form suited to attract cultivated minds, that he must be regarded as superior to all other English statesmen. It is certain that the splendor of his imagination was an important element of his power; but it was also a cause of weakness, especially in his later years, when it was less under his control than it had been in the early part of his Parliamentary career. Both in regard to Warren Hastings and to the French Revolution his imagination seems to have usurped the place of his judgment, and he expressed opinions which can be traced only to the feverish workings of an ungoverned fancy. It was his course upon these questions which, more than anything else, justifies Lord Macaulay's assertion, that "he generally chose his side like a fanatic, and defended it like a philosopher."

In all the relations of private life Burke's conduct was irreproachable. His own writings and the testimony of his contemporaries bear witness to the warmth of his affections and the humanity of his sentiments. Indeed, the keenness of his sensibilities is scarcely less remarkable than the strength of his intellect and the gorgeousness of his fancy. From the fashionable vices of his age he was singularly free, presenting in this respect a marked contrast to most of his distinguished contemporaries. Though he was fond of wine, he never drank enough to be affected by it; and he does not seem ever to have frequented the gaming-table. Burke, however, was a poor man with expensive tastes; and there is reason to believe that all of his pecuniary transactions would not bear a very close scrutiny. The late Lord Holland used to say that

he was always a jobber; but this assertion was doubtless prompted by personal ill-will, and it must be taken with large allowance. Still, it is clear that Burke's hands were not entirely free from stains, and that the suspicions which attach to his pecuniary dealings are not wholly unfounded. It would be a gross perversion of language to say that he was ever bribed; but his relations with Lord Rockingham were certainly not those which should exist between statesmen. Nor are the circumstances attending the purchase of Beaconsfield so easily explained as some of his eulogists have contended.

ART. IV. — *Writings of Thomas De Quincey.* Boston : Ticknor and Fields. 1854—59. 21 vols.

THOMAS DE QUINCEY is a man of mark and power, who has silently grown, out of the costly toil of nearly half a century of culture and literary achievement, to his present high rank and intellectual proportions. As a thinker and a scholar he has few living equals; as a literary artist he is without a rival. He has traversed with more or less profundity of insight and research the grandest provinces in the empire of human speculation; and his familiarity with metaphysics, and the subtle distinctions involved in them, is so close and intimate, and his expositions are so elaborate and lucid, as almost to produce the impression that we are holding converse with a mind contemporary with the aboriginal secrets of nature.

This remarkable man was born at Greenhay, then a suburb of Manchester, although now densely populated, and absorbed, indeed, into the arterial life of that city. His father was a merchant of high standing, exclusively engaged in foreign commerce, and possessed of a considerable fortune. He died when De Quincey was seven years old, leaving him and his five brothers and sisters to the care of four guardians, with an income of £ 1,600 a year. His mother was one of those high-born dames who belong of right to the olden time